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PROCESSION FOR THE PEACE YEAR—1921

By EDNA LOGAN HUMMEL

Here, on the rugged bluff, from whence there gleams
The river, gray beneath the sunlit hills,
And trees on which the kiss of Glory falls
Till all their number thrill with vivid hues,
I watch a long procession in array
Of Autumn's gold and scarlet uniforms,
Bearing this fateful year to his long home.

And lo, you pass, old Year, as one who goes
Not to an unremembered grave, where lies
The far, dim land of long-forgotten times;
Nor yet to those scarred sepulchres of hate
Where spectral horrors stalk the haunted mind;
But, sweeping forward o'er the bannered hills,
The pageant of your passing moves along
Triumphant to a goal of honor bright
In Memory's trophied hall; for you have brought
Into the heart of man a long-sought hope,
Such hope as women, weeping o'er their slain,
Have prayed for since the days of Eve; such hope
As war-torn heroes, knowing how all vain
Their costly victories were 'gainst future wars,
Strove hard to realize.

Methinks when from

Some bold Judean height the seer beheld
The future, clear as panoramic hills,
He trembled, all amazed to see afar
The white mists pierced by crimson streaks of dawn
Aquiver in the west, and morning star
Of peace rise in the blue. Perchance today
That seer has place in this vast conference
Now planning world-wide peace, and strangely thrills
To see his ancient prophecy fulfilled.

Bright Year, farewell! The alabaster box
Of international sacrifice you hold
To bathe a world whose blood-stained feet have trod
A bitter winepress, till that autumn day
When Peace, victorious, flings her glowing robes
Around you, happy Year, and bids you go,
Thus panoplied, to glory evermore.

DISCOURAGEMENTS AT THE HAGUE

Thus far, little has been reported from the experts' conference on Russia at The Hague to dispel the gloom of those in this country, officials and others, who said the sessions would be a continuation of the Genoa Conference, and would offer little prospect of genuine improvement in the relations between Russia and the balance of Europe. The conference has been a series of threatened breaks.

Some weeks before the sessions at The Hague started, there was a tart exchange of notes between France and Great Britain. On June 1 Premier Poincaré in a note to the British Government reviewed the French theories and position, demanding that the Soviet Government withdraw its note of May 11 and reiterating that political and diplomatic questions should be avoided at The Hague. The deduction frequently made from M. Poincaré's note was that he thought the powers, through their experts, should formulate a scheme of Russian reconstruction, and then lay it before the Russian delegates. The British began their reply by saying the French note showed some confusion of thought and unfamiliarity with the ground covered at Genoa. It proceeded more or less along the lines Mr. Lloyd-George has laid down frequently—co-operation, acceptance of the fact of the Soviet Government's authority in Russia, and treatment of the problems in the light of expediency. On June 12 M. Poincaré sent a rejoinder to the British, in which he intimated that confusion of thought plagued the British rather than the French.

MEETING OF THE PREMIERS

So things remained, with great expectations arising in some sections of British and French thought, from the scheduled meeting of Lloyd-George and Poincaré in London in connection with the latter's visit for the Verdun celebration. Hope of consummation of the long-discussed Anglo-French pact was stimulated greatly in advance, as an incident of the meeting, and of the desired co-operation between the two nations, but the news that followed the meeting did not bear out the hopes. On the contrary, representative newspapers in both Great Britain and France found little satisfaction in the results of the Lloyd-George-Poincaré conference.

The *Manchester Guardian* took occasion to speak plainly to France on the subject of her stiff and insistent demands on Germany, her continued expenditures, her failure to increase taxes, and the maintenance of her army, described as "enormously greater than any present dangers can justify." The *Daily Chronicle*, semi-official organ of Lloyd-George, said that "if Poincaré hopes for conclusion of an Anglo-French pact, he should understand that this project is today far below the horizon. He should understand that it is the French policy of the last six months under his direction which has led to the eclipse of the project of the pact." And *L'Oeuvre*, considered by many an intelligent and independent liberal French paper, had this to say on the results of the Premier's conference:

Hague Conference—nothing.
Interallied debts—nothing.
Anglo-French pact—nothing.
Reparations—left with Reparation Commission, and, if necessary, to conference.
Tangler—left to conference.
Near East—left to conference.

Were we not right in warning not to be enthusiastic too quickly over this London meeting?

THE RUSSIAN ATTITUDE

And while the British and French were thus parleying and jockeying, the reports from the east of Europe revealed the Russians in an unyielding mood. The Russian delegation reached The Hague in the latter part of June, and soon showed there had been no abatement in the quiet assurance and, as some of the critics thought, impudence that had so greatly irritated delegates of other nations at Genoa. Indeed, they seemed to have additional assurance—or impudence. Edward L. James, writing from The Hague to the *New York Times*, stated in a somewhat outraged way that Chitcherin asked at Genoa for a loan of \$1,000,000,000, but at The Hague the Russians, speaking through Litvinoff, asked for \$1,600,000,000.

THE RUSSIAN REPORT ON GENOA

In view of this self-contained attitude of the Russians at The Hague, there is interest in a report made by Joffe, one of their delegates to Genoa, on their course in that conference, for it works much color into the detail of the account. The report appears in *Russian Information and Review*, issue of June 15. It follows:

The memorandum of the Allied experts, known as the memorandum of London, bore the title, "General European Economic Conference, Preparatory Commission." This means that the Genoa Conference began in London, and was not a general European conference at all, but a conference of experts nominated by the Entente—the group of victorious powers. Protests against this procedure came from the Little Entente as well as from the neutral powers. The fact that thirty-five European States were invited to a general European conference, while only five of them prepared the agenda and the resolutions, is significant of the post-war condition of Europe. Equally characteristic were the pre-Genoa stages of the conference and the contradictions within the leading group of powers itself. The attitude of France towards the Cannes resolution was significant of the French divergence from British policy, and the summoning of a European conference was a move which Britain was forced to take in her conflict with France. The Russian question came to the front at the conference because British policy has only two alternatives: either to allow the control of foreign policy to slip from her hands, or to come to an agreement with Russia.

RIDICULE OF FIRST SESSION

The first session of the conference was of a formal, solemn character. Sounding phrases were uttered announcing that victor and vanquished no longer existed, and that the conference had met to solve the difficulties from which Europe was suffering. No concrete proposal was, however, put forward, no program or hint of a program was forthcoming. The result was that when we at the first plenary session declared that the limitation of armaments was an essential step for the solution of Europe's problems, the statement was met with general approval, whereas Barthou's hysterical protest against the introduction of armaments was received with marked coldness and impatience.

This vagueness as to what the conference actually was to do pervaded the whole of the first stages and seemed to be shared by the inviting powers themselves, since the famous London memorandum, which became the crux of the negotiations, was brought forward in a most casual manner. At any rate, so it seemed, when one day part of the Russian delegation, in the intervals between the sessions of the commissions, was sitting on the veranda, and Lloyd-George approached and asked, "Have you received the London memorandum?" We replied that we knew nothing about

it except from the references that had appeared in the European papers. Whereupon Lloyd-George said, "Very well. I will have it sent you today." From this it appears that the original intention was to communicate the memorandum privately, and only later was it decided to hand it to the so-called Political Subcommittee to become the basis of negotiations.

COMMENT ON FRANCE

It is interesting to note that the Political Subcommittee, in deference to French susceptibilities as to the introduction of political questions, was at first called the Russian Subcommittee. And it is significant that France, who consciously assumed the part of the *enfant terrible* of the conference, attempted to deprive Russia and Germany of votes on the subcommittees on a level with the five Entente powers. France wished to lump Russia and Germany with the remaining States and assign them six votes between them all. This original proposal was strongly opposed by the Russians, who received the support of all the other delegates. France submitted when it was suggested that the dispute should be thrashed out in a plenary session.

The terms of the resolutions drawn up in London and discussed by the subcommittee all began with the phrase "It is desirable," and none of them bore an obligatory character. When the Russians had been occupied for some days with their reply, and in response to impatient queries could give no assurance as to when it would be ready for presentation, they were one day approached by an intermediary and informed that Lloyd-George desired to speak with some of the Russian delegates at his residence, the Villa de Alberti. It was decided to send Chitcherin, Litvinoff, and Krassin. When they arrived they were astonished to find that, besides Lloyd-George, there were seated at a large table, representatives of all the Entente powers except Japan, together with stenographers, translators, and secretaries. In fact, the whole Political Subcommittee, with the exclusion of the representative of the neutral powers, the Little Entente, and Germany, had been transferred to the Villa de Alberti.

AT THE LLOYD-GEORGE VILLA

It was at this villa that the discussion of the London memorandum took place, and that the argument was put forward that the question of Russia's debts must be settled before the question of credits and European reconstruction could be approached. The Russians refused to recognize the war debts, since Russia had renounced the fruits of victory. "Give us Constantinople," we argued, "the Dardanelles, and all that Russia was promised in the event of an Allied victory. We shall not, of course, retain Constantinople or any of the other territory; but we shall dispose of it in our way and not in yours. We might even return it to the people to whom it belongs. If you insist that we repay what was actually given to Russia for the prolongation of the war, and was spent during the war, then the other side of the account must also be considered." Lloyd-George said, jokingly, "Well, perhaps we shall let you have Constantinople." Whereupon we replied, "Very good; perhaps we shall repay your debts; but until then we do not recognize them."

The pre-war debt we were prepared to recognize, in accordance with the Cannes resolution, if our counter-claims were also recognized. These counter-claims amounted to fifty milliard gold roubles, for which we presented an account. The French inspired the rumor that we were not only refusing to pay our debts, but even demanding fifteen milliards ourselves. We informed the press that we should not insist upon the payment of those fifteen milliards.

At a private meeting at the Villa de Alberti the British proposed the following compromise: Russia's counter-claims shall cover the war debt and the interest on the pre-war debt, and a moratorium shall be established for the repayment of the pre-war debt. When we inquired as to how long the moratorium would apply, Lloyd-George said, "Well, I cannot say, but, no doubt, a fairly long time." We were assured on all hands that this amounted to a virtual re-

nouncement of the debt, but we replied that we were not going to begin our international career by assuming obligations which we knew we were not in a position to fulfill. There was no possibility of fulfilling such an obligation unless it was made possible for us to bring about a rapid economic revival of Russia. Such a revival depends upon our receiving adequate credits.

CREDITS AND RECOGNITION

This basic point, with its corollary, the *de jure* recognition of Russia, we put forward as conditions for accepting the Allies' compromise. We named one milliard dollars as the credit we required. Then began the wrangle over the question as to which should precede the other—the recognition of debts or the granting of credits. At this period Urquhart came on the scene, even less conciliatory than usual, and his influence over Lloyd-George was obvious. It was finally agreed that Chitcherine should embody the Russian conditions in a letter to Lloyd-George, which should form the basis for further discussions of the Political Subcommission. In this letter the period of the moratorium was to be fixed provisionally at thirty years. This letter was presented, but before the Subcommission could meet our reply to the London memorandum was completed and delivered. This reply was drafted on a different basis from Chitcherine's letter to Lloyd-George, but it represented our position in principle, whereas the letter represented our reply to the definite proposals put before us at the villa. The French delegates at the next meeting of the commission of experts took advantage of the contrast between these two replies, and after a histrionic display they left the committee before an explanation could be offered.

The next step was the Genoa memorandum handed to the Russian delegates on May 2. Political questions of Asia Minor and Rumania that had hitherto not been discussed and were entirely unexpected were introduced into this memorandum. They may have been intended as a basis for retreat, or simply introduced to frighten the Russians, but they did not achieve their object. The assertion that capitalists would not grant credits unless given assurances by the recognition of all old debts was contradicted by the Russo-German Treaty and the various agreements which Russia was concluding with private capitalists. The proposed credit of £20,000,000 was not a credit to Russia, but to foreign capitalists for the purpose of trade, and would be of little use to Russia.

To sum up the results of the conference: In the first place, it was the funeral of the Entente as the rulers of Europe and the personification of the Treaty of Versailles. In the second place, it signified a reorientation of Europe towards Russia, which was markedly evident by the attitude of the various delegates, especially of the neutral and smaller powers, and by the representatives of the powers who displayed great interest—often very sympathetic interest—in Russia.

RUSSIAN COURAGE

The fact that Soviet Russia, with the allied Soviet republics, was the only State that had the courage to resist the hegemony of the Entente during the protracted negotiations at Genoa, and the only State that could attract to its side all the other oppressed States—that, in my opinion, is the victory obtained at Genoa. In no way and under no conditions can that be effaced from the pages of history.

THE CONSEQUENCES

With Russia thus aggressive and "top-lofty," as they say in some parts of this country, notwithstanding her impoverished condition and the resultant calls upon the balance of the world to help feed her famished millions, and with the other nations represented at The Hague having difficulty in agreeing upon a policy with which to confront the Soviet agents, the hesitation, doubts, threats, break-ups and patching-ups that have marked the meetings were well-nigh inevitable. Secretary Hughes' gift of prophecy was hardly overworked when he foresaw these events, at the time he refused the invitation to Genoa, and later when he refused to go to The Hague.

A PRIZE EDITORIAL

FRANK M. O'BRIEN, of the editorial staff of the *New York Herald*, has recently been awarded the Pulitzer prize of \$500 "for the best editorial article written during the year, the test of excellence being clearness of style, moral purpose, sound reasoning, and the power to influence public opinion in the right direction." The editorial, published in the *Herald* November 11, 1921, was as follows:

THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

That which takes place today at the National Cemetery in Arlington is a symbol, a mystery, and a tribute. It is an entombment only in the physical sense. It is rather the enthronement of Duty and Honor. This man who died for his country is the symbol of these qualities—a far more perfect symbol than any man could be whose name and deeds we knew. He represents more, really, than the unidentified dead, for we cannot separate them spiritually from the war heroes whose names are written on their gravestones. He—this spirit whom we honor—stands for the unselfishness of all.

This, of all monuments to the dead, is lasting and immutable. So long as men revere the finer things of life, the tomb of the nameless hero will remain a shrine. Nor, with the shifts of time and mind, can there be a changing of values. No historian shall rise to modify the virtues or the faults of the Soldier. He has an immunity for which kings might pray. The years may bring erosion to the granite, but not to the memory of the Unknown.

It is a common weakness of humanity to ask the questions that can never be answered in this life. Probably none to whom the drama of the Unknown Soldier has appealed has not wondered who, in the sunshine of earth, was the protagonist of today's ceremony. A logger from the Penobscot? An orchardist from the Pacific coast? A well-driller from Texas? A machinist from Connecticut? A lad who left his hoe to rust among the Missouri corn? A longshoreman from Hell's Kitchen? Perhaps some youth from the tobacco fields, resting again in his own Virginia. All that the army tells us of him is that he died in battle. All that the heart tells is that some woman loved him. More than that, no man shall learn. In this mystery, as in the riddle of the universe, the wise wonder; but they would not know.

What were his dreams, his ambitions? Likely he shared those common to the millions: a life of peace and honest struggle, with such small success as comes to most who try; and at the end the place on the hillside among his fathers. Today to do honor at his last resting-place come the greatest soldiers of the age, famous statesmen from other continents, the President, the high judges and the legislators of his own country, and many men who, like himself, fought for the flag. At his bier will gather the most remarkable group that America has seen. And the tomb which Fate reserved for him is, instead of the narrow cell on the village hillside, one as lasting as that of Rameses and as inspiring as Napoleon's.

It is a great religious ceremony, this burial today.